IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

1.   (Previously presented) A method including

at a device, reading a set of information from a set of resources including at least a source local to said device and an information server remote from said device;

setting values for one or more variables at said device in response to said information; and

if said setting step changes an indication of said set of resources, re-performing the steps of reading and setting until said step of setting does not change said indication of said set of resources;

wherein said setting step resolves conflicts when said information from any two sources assigns two inconsistent values to any of said one or more variables by determining, for said any two sources, a higher priority source and a lower priority source.

2.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein said information includes configuration information used at start-up by said device.

3.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 1, including

recording said information at selected times for said device;

at said device, reading said recorded information in addition to said set of information; and

comparing said recorded information with at least some of said set of information.

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 3, wherein said selected times include at each restart of said device.

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein said set of resources includes at least a first file at said information server and a second file at a second information server.

8.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein said set of resources includes at least one file at said information server.

9.   (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein said information includes a set of values for named variables, and wherein said resolving conflicts further includes parsing, from said higher priority source, an instruction relating to setting said variable; and performing said instruction from said higher priority source.

3

10.   (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 9, wherein said instruction has a syntactic form indicating one or more of the following operations:

replacing a value from said lower priority source with a value from said higher priority source, or

appending a value from said higher priority source to a value from said lower priority source.

11.   (Previously presented) An apparatus including

at least one information server;

a device remote from said information server, said device including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said device to perform steps of reading a set of information from a set of resources including at least a source local to said device and said information server, setting values for one or more variables at said device in response to said information, and if said setting step changes an indication of said set of resources, re-performing said steps of reading and setting until said step of setting does not change said indication of said set of resources;

wherein said setting step resolves conflicts when said information from any two sources assigns two inconsistent values to any of said one or more variables by determining, for said any two sources, a higher priority said source and a lower priority said source.

12.   (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 11, wherein said memory at said device includes computer programs and data structures that when performed use said information at start-up by said device.

13.   (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 11, said device including

memory having a record of said information at some past time;

memory including computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said device to compare said recorded information with at least some of said set of information.

14.   (Cancelled)

15.   (Previously presented) A device including a processor and memory, said memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said processor

to couple said device to an information server using a communication link;

to read a set of configuration information from a set of resources including at least a source local to said device and said information server;

to set values for one or more variables at said device in response to said configuration information, said configuration information being used at start-up by said device; and

if setting said values changes an indication of said set of resources, to re-perform reading said set of configuration information and setting of said values until said setting of said values does not change said indication of said set of resources;

wherein said setting of said values resolves conflicts when said configuration information from any two sources assigns two inconsistent values to any of said one or more variables by determining, for said any two sources, a higher priority said source and a lower priority said source.

16.   (Previously Presented) The device as in claim 15, including

memory having a record of said information at some past time;

wherein said computer programs and data structures are capable of being performed by said or to compare said recorded information with at least some of said set of information.

17.   (Cancelled)

18.   (Currently amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein said <u>resources of said</u> set of resources are disposed at a sequence of locations to be read by said device.

19.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 18, further including defining a relative priority for said information server and a second information server in response to a relative position of said information server and second information server in said sequence.

6

20.   (Previously presented) The method as in claim 18, further including selecting said sequence of locations in response to said indication of said set of resources, which is settable in said setting step.

21.   (Currently amended) The apparatus as in claim 11, wherein said <u>resources of said</u> set of resources are disposed at a sequence of locations to be read by said device.

22.   (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 21, wherein a relative priority is defined for said information server and a second information server in response to a relative position of said information server and second information server in said sequence.

23.   (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 21, wherein said sequence of locations is selected in response to said indication of said set of resources, which is settable in said setting step.

24 – 38. (Cancelled)